Class Newsletter February 20, 2015

Dear Parents and Families,

Happy Winter Recess! I hope you all have a fun and relaxing break. I look forward to seeing you all again on March 4th.

It has been such an incredible experience being at the Teachers College at Columbia University this week. The focus of the institute was to help educators bringing rigorous and engaging methods of teaching to content area (science and social studies) literacy, to match the rigor of the new Common Core standards. I have developed a repertoire of skills to help students think and read nonfiction texts analytically, including reading for central ideas, synthesizing, and comparing and contrasting. I am excited to bring this new knowledge back to the classroom.

Here’s a summary of what we learned this week:

**Literacy- Informational Text -** Our learning target is, ***I can read smoothly and expressively like talking*.**  We continued our work on reading fluency and expression. Good readers read smoothly, like we are talking, by phrasing and scooping words in a sentence. They raise the tone of their voice for question marks, stop at periods, and give characters a voice. We practiced this skill by reading and performing the play, *The Emperor’s Egg*, adapted from the book written by Martin Jenkins. Students learned how to read a script, follow all characters’ parts and being ready when it is their time to read. At home listen to your child’s fluency and expression when they read to you.

We’ve also been working hard on our book reviews of informational texts.  With a focus on our penguin

theme, students have been writing about which texts have helpful text features that catch our eye, grab

our attention, and help us make decisions about what to read. We were able to link this work to our fiction

book reviews from earlier in the year. Students are learning about the real-life, authentic purposes of different genres of writing.

**Reading Homework**- Thank you for all your help getting students reading at home!   Please help your child keep track of their borrowed books and return them once a week.  If you believe the books are lost, please contact me either via email or send a note into school.  I want students to be responsible for our materials and am holding them accountable for their homework bags and books.  Thank you for your support!

**Math –** Our Learning Target is, ***I can use the ‘make ten strategy’ to help me solve problems with three numbers.*** This week we started solving equations with 3 numbers and using a new solving strategy that helps make solving these problems easier. The ‘*make ten strategy’* encourages students to associate two addends in a problem that make ten and then add the third addend, making the problem easier to solve. From here students will begin to decompose numbers in equations to bridge through the friendly ten, leaving them with a simpler equation to solve. For example:

**Word Work –** Our current *Fun*dations unit is: Words with up to 5 sounds**. Example words include:** ranch, twist, shrimp, blimp,

Sight words we studied and quizzed this week: **after, thing, our, just, name**

Sight words for the week of March 9th**: can’t, man, think, great, saw**

**You can find all our sight words to date, as well as what’s coming up next at**

http://mrsgalushasfirstgrade.weebly.com/word-work.html

**Some other logistics:**

* **Report cards come home TODAY, in your child’s backpack, Friday, February 20th.**
* **WINTER RECESS starts February 22nd! School will resume on WEDNESDAY March 4th.**
* **Parent Teacher Conference sign-up begins online Wednesday, March 4th**

[**http://ptcfast.com/schools/Champlain\_Elementary\_School**](http://ptcfast.com/schools/Champlain_Elementary_School)

  If you do not have access to a computer or are having difficulty with this online system you may

 call the office at 864-8477 and speak with Heather Sienkiewicz who will schedule your

 conference for you.

Please feel free to contact me anytime, and please check out our website!

Sincerely,

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